LITHUANIA

COUNTRY AND NATION

1946

AUGSBURG

Lake "Dubingiai"

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COUNTRY AND POPULATION

1 Physiographical Characteristics

Lithuania's Position. Lithuanian is to be understood not only the territory of the former independent Lithuanian State, but also the territory to the East, South and West, where the Lithuanian language is still spoken, where Lithuanian names of localities and other national remnants are still prevailing, where there is a clear ethnological and ethnografical Lithuanian type. Lithuania is the land, where Lithuanians are living for ages, and where through the efforts and toil of Lithuanians, the natural landscape is changed into a civilized landscape.

Lithuania is one of the basin countries (south eastern part) on the Baltic Sea and its tributaries the river Nemunas (Memel) which flow through Lithuania to the Baltic Sea and makes Lithuania the Nemunas basin country. Taking a pair of compasses and using the river Nemunas head as a centre it is possible to draw a circle in which Europe with its peninsulas, islands and capes would be included. The 25-th meridian which is considered as Europe's central meridian, cuts through Lithuania lengthwise and considering the geographical width of Europe, Lithuania will be found in the middle of Europe.

Practically Lithuania should be considered as a Central European country but most often it is considered as part of Eastern Europe or more exactly a part of the Baltic-Scandinavian region.

The direct neighbours of Lithuania are Latvians, White Russians, Poles and the German colonized East Prussia. The most permanent and constant border of Lithuania is with Latvia, but with the other neighbours there are no clear boundaries. Here we come in contact with larger and smaller border zones where can be found cultural and religious differences.

Lithuania's boundaries in ancient and modern times never did fit in with Lithuania's ethnographical boundaries.

Lithuania's territory covers 55.658 sq. km. (21.484 sq. m.) [1]), of these 2848 sq. km makes up the Territory of Klaipėda (Memel). A large part of Lithuania with its largest city Vilnius (Vilna) was occupied by the Poles, approximately 32.000 sq. km. In 1939 a small part of this territory with Vilnius was returned to Lithuania. Therefore the Lithuanian State covered an area of 62.500 sq. km. (24.125 sq. m.) with a population of 3, 2 million inhabitants. While the Lithuanian ethnographical minimum is considered not less than 96.000 sq. km. with 4,5 million inhabitants.

Surface. Lithuania's present geological surface is due to glacial period. During the Ice Age glaciers moving from the Scandinavian mountains towards Lithuania, carried boulders, stones, gravel and covered Lithuania with moraines. The depth of the moraines is various. In some places their depth is just a few metres, while in other places their depth is from 200 to 300 metres (from 700 to 1.000 feet) and more. Lithuania's high points, hills are made up from moraines whose maximum height reaches 300 metres above sea level. The high points are found in Central Samogitia (Žemaitija), district of Suduva, Dzūkija and Upper Lithuania. The most sharply defined moraines were found by the last Glacial Period which did not cover all of Lithuania's territory. Ašmenos' moraine ridge, Lydos' plateau and Naugarduko highlands were not touched by the last glacial period. A clear difference can be seen between the nature of these highlands and the highlands mentioned above. In the last mentioned highlands there are practically no lakes. They have been drained or have formed into peat bogs. The moraines have an aged appearance. In the time after the glacial period Lithuania's surface was finally formed by flowing waters — streams and rivers which performed the gigantic job of drainage and formed the present Lithuanian hydographical network. Lithuania's largest river is the Nemunas which flows into the Kurishes Haff through a large delta. Other large Lithuanian rivers are tributaries of the Nemunas: Merkys, Nėris, Nevėžys, Dubysa (Tributaries on the right) and Šešupė (left tributary). The river Nemunas has a length of 931 km. (578 miles) [2]) its basin covers an area of 98.000 sq. km.

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[1]) 1 sqare mile equals 2,59 sq. km; or 1 sq. km equals 0,386 square mile.
[2]) 1 km. equals 0,621 mile

Climate and Flora. Lithuania belongs to the Central European climate belt and the transitory Zone between Europe's oceanic and continental climate. Lithuania is that country, where the oceanic and continental climates are in balance. The Gulf Stream influences Lithuania's climate to the extent that the average yearly temperature is raised almost 5 degrees centigrade.

The yearly average temperature fluctuates between 6^0—7^0 (C). The warmest month is July, when the temperature in Vilnius is 19^0 C,
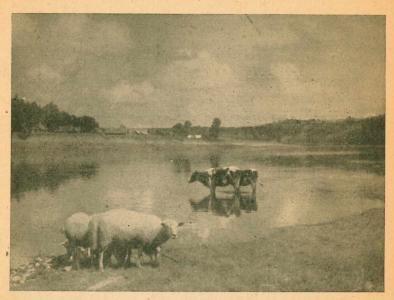

A landscape

and on the sea coast 16^0 C. While the coldest month is January reaching $6,4^0$ C below zero (Kaunas); on the sea coast February is the coldest month. The yearly average temperature can be found in the months of April and October.

The average rainfall in Lithuania is 580 mm per year. August is the month with the largest average rainfall 93 mm. The rivers usually thaw out in the month of April.

The prevailing winds in Lithuania are from the west and southwest, who for the most part also bring the rainfall.

From the botanical point of view Lithuania belongs to the "variety" forest zones. In ancient times the forests consisted mainly of leaf-bearing tree regions were cleared and turned into arable land. At present the evergreen are predominant, that is pine and fir-trees. Pine-trees are mostly found in sandy soil which is not suitable for farming. Typical trees found in Lithuanian forests: Oak, lime, pine and fir-tres. Fruit-trees, which are found as far north as Southern Finnland, also grow in Lithuania.

A view of the country

Of the cultivated plants the following grow best: oats, rye, sugar, beets and flax. Of these flax grows particularly well which makes Lithuania one of the leading countries in Europe for the growing and export of flax.

Inhabitants. There were 2.550.000 inhabitants in Lithuania in 1938. Of that number 150.000 inhabitants were living in the Territory of Klaipéda (Memel), which was seized from Lithuania on March 23, 1939 Under the agreement with USSR on October 10, 1939 Vilnius and surrounding territory were returned to Lithuania, an area of 6.880 sq. km. and 650.000 inhabitants. There were 48,4 inhabitants per sq. km. According to the census of 1938, Lithuanians represent 81% of the population, Jews 7%, Germans 4%, Poles 3%, Russians and White-Russians 2,3%, other nationals 2,7%. With the return of Vilnius and its surrounding territory the percentage of Polish and White Russian speaking inhabitants was increased. But the war had changed this proportion. Lithuania has a natural growing population, in 1938 the increase was 1,24%, one of the largest in Europe. The percentage of inhabitants between the ages of 15 and 30 was 31%, largest in the world. The same can be said about inhabitants over 65 years old.

In 1938, 85% of the population were Roman Catholic, 7% Jewish, 2,3% Greek Orthodox, 4,2% Protestant and 1,5% others.

79% of the population were living in villages and only 21% in towns. The percent of the population living in towns was smaller during the beginning of modern independent Lithuania. In 1923 it reached only 15%. People living in villages are mostly engaged in agriculture and only a few have other occupations: trade and business.

In the XIX-th century, for instance, the majority of poeple had lived in various types of villages. When serfdom was abolished in 1861, the period of breaking up collective villages into individual farms began. This was done through individual decisions. This first period touched Suduvija— a district to the west of the Nemunas, a part of Biržu-Pasvalio district and partly in the Ašmena district. To a degree, a large impulse to change over from village to individual farms was given by the so called Stolypino reform in 1905. The breaking up of the village farming system in accordance with this reform began in 1907 and through to 1914, that is to the beginning of World War I. In spite of this land reform the largest portion of Lithuania's inhabitants still lived in villages. Farming villages were practically eliminated by independent Lithuania's land reform. At present Lithuania's farming is done on individual farms. The most important reason for changing over to individual farms was to abolish strip-and-threefield farming systems. This process of changing over was performed very quickly and on a large scale, and for these reasons was not accurately, rationally and sufficiently backed by the state. The farmers parti-

Girls from High-Lithuania in national dress

cularily had much trouble in moving to their individual farms, putting up new farm buildings, changing over to new farming systems, while not having enough money for these purposes. But each farmer was more than satisfied with his new farm, which economically gave him a new and better life and for this reason he would never return to the old village farming system. The change over to individual farms was an epochal accomplishment, Lithuania's agricultural appearance changed, the Lithuanian farmer began to work under new agricultural, cultural and social conditions.

There are few cities in Lithuania. Places having more than 2000 inhabitants, having a market place and administrative centres are considered towns. The transitional form between village and town is the "church village". A church village is a larger village or the union of several villages, and always has a church, a few stores, a school, several craftsmen, sometimes a market-place and at times is the county administrative centre.

Lithuanian towns have their origins from the following: old estates, castles and crossroads. The majority of the cities are found on rivers, particularily at the junction of two rivers. That shows that these cities' foundings were as centres of protection.

The Bigger Cities: V i l n i u s (Vilna) — 208.000 inhabitants. One of the oldest cities in Lithuania, built at the junction of the rivers Nėris and Vilnelė, and later spread out. From ancient times the most important Lithuanian city. Abundant with beautiful churches, some of great architectural beauty, and other ancient buildings. The best architectural examples are: the cathedral, St. Peter's and St. Paul's, St. Anne's (late Gothic), St. John's and St. Theresia's churches, the University, the Town-Hall and other buildings. From the XIV-th to XVIII-th centuries Vilnius was the most important city in Eastern Europe and was equal in importance to Moscow, Cracow, Novgorod. Kiev; and during the Russian and Polish occupational periods, it was only a provincial city. It did not develop any large industries. It had leather-tanneries, breweries, tobacco, furniture and linseed-oil factories.

K a u n a s — 158.000 inhabitants. Also an ancient city at the junction of the rivers Nemunas and Nėris. Until Vilnius was returned to Lithuania, Kaunas was the most important city. During the Czarist Russia's period it was a very important fortress town. While in independent Lithuania it expanded to several times its size. It is known as an industrial centre. As regards to industry and trade it surpasses by far Vilnius and other Lithuanian towns. It's most important industries are: wood-working, textiles, rubber, paper, tobacco, candy, canneries and others.

K l a i p ė d a (Memel) — 50.000 inhabitants. Lithuania's only port. Klaipėda under Lithuanian government developed and expanded to a great degree. The port of Klaipėda's tonnage turnover in comparison

with figures previous to World War I, expanded 3 times, and to a greater extent in value. For during the German period, Klaipėda was for the most part a timber exporting centre, while during the Lithuanian period it's imports and exports were a far greater variety of merchandise, raw products and food. Through the port of Klaipėda 90% of Lithuanians exports and imports were handled.

Šiauliai — 32.000 inhabitants. An important transportation centre. It's industry consists of tanneries, breweries, canneries and candy factories.

Panevėžys — 27.000 inhabitants. It is noted for it's sugar refineries, flour mills, meat packing houses and yeast industry.

The City of Kaunas

Other towns worth mentioning are: Mariampolė — 15.000 inhabitants, Ukmergė — 14.000, Tauragė — 11.000, Alytus — 10.000, Vilkaviškis — 9.000 inhabitants.

Well-known summer resorts are: Palanga, a beautiful seaside resort, Nida and Juodkrantė, two lovely watering-places between the Lagoon and the Baltic Sea, and Birštonas, a famous health-resort having mineral water springs with healing properties.

Juodkrantė, a fishing-village and watering-place with a view on the Lagoon

Transportation. Most of Lithuania's transport is over roadways. There was a large network of roadways. The roads were used not only by horse drawn vehicles, but also by motorised vehicles.

Comparatively there were few highways (surfaced) in Lithuania. During the Czarist Russian period Lithuania was crossed by two important highways: Leningrad — Daugavpils — Ukmergė — Kaunas—Mariampolė—Suvalkai—Warsaw and Riga—Joniškis—Šiauliai—Tauragė—Tilsit. During independent Lithuania's period the following highways were constructed: Kaunas— Kretinga— Klaipėda—, Kaunas —Kėdainiai— Panevėžys— Biržai, and other short extentions. The traffic on these highwys for the most part was motorised: trucks and buses, which was a great help to Lithuanian transportation (Lithuania's railway system was not fully developed). The construction work on the highway between Kaunas and Vilnius was discontinued due

to conditions of war. Lithuania's railway network is very small in comparison with Western European countries. The first railway line: Daugavpils— Vilnius— Gardinas— Warsaw was constructed in the year 1861. Other lines: Daugavpils— Radviliškis; Liepoja— Mažeikiai— Šiauliai— Kaišiadorys— Kaunas; Kaunas— Virbalis and the narrow-gauge railway Panevėžys— Švenčionėliai were constructed by Czarist Russia at later dates.

During World War I the Germans, for strategical reasons, constructed the lines: Tilsit— Tauragė— Šiauliai— Joniškis; Skuodas —Priekulė and narrow-gauge railway lines: Šiauliai— Pasvalys— Biržai; Ska-piškis— Suveiniškis; Jonava—Ukmergė. Under independent Lithuania the lines Kazlu Rūda— Mariampolė— Šeštokai; Kužiai— Telšiai— Plungė— Kretinga were constructed. The line between Šiauliai— Biržai was improved and connected to Panevėžys through Joniškėlis. The Russian and German-constructed railway lines were constructed more for strategical purposes (War), while independent Lithuania constructed lines from a purely economical viewpoints. 481 km of Lithuania's rivers are used for transportation purposes. With the marking and dredging channels in the rivers the water-highway systems length could be increased to a great extent. In addition many of Lithuania's rivers or parts of rivers are suitable for floating timber. Internal airlines were not fully developed.

Lithuanian Emigration. Lithuanian emigration in the pre-war period was very large. Only to the American continent about one million

"The Land Bank" in Kaunas

Lithuanian had emigrated. A larger emigration had begun in the middle of the XIX-th century after the abolishment of serfdom. The peasants and workers from poor districts had mostly emigrated. The majority of emigrants had turned into Americans in the period of the second generation, others being very good citizens of their new country had not lost connections with their country of origin. In U.S.A. there are approximately 800.000 Lithuanians. They are mostly concentrated in the triangle of the cities Chicago, Boston, Baltimore. In Chicago there are 100.000 Lithuanians. Until recent times it was the largest Lithuanian city in the whole world. Only in the period of Lithuanian independence Kaunas had over 100.000 Lithuanians. Of other U.S.A. cities where many Lithuanians are residing, the following are worth mentioning: New York (30.000), Detroit, Pittsbourg Philadelphia (15.000 each), Worcester, Mass., Cleveland, Ohio (10.000 each) in other cities less.

There are over 150 Lithuanian parishes in the U.S.A. whose wealth is about 60.000.000 dollars. Besides there are various other organizations, schools and press. There are also many plants and business enterprises possessed by Lithuanians.

Besides the Lithuanians in the U.S.A. there are about 50.000 in Brazil, who had emigrated later than to the U.S.A. They are mostly living in Sao Paulo. In Argentine there are about 30.000 Lithuanians and are mostly living in Buenos Aires. In Uraguay there are about 12.000 living mostly in Montevideo. In Canada 10.000, England and Scotland 20.000, USSR 100.000, Latvia 25.000, Poland 3000, Union of South Africa 2000 (Johannesburg, Cape Town, Pretoria), Australia 1000 (Sidney). The Lithuanian became an everywhere being creature.

The emigration of Lithuanians during the period of Lithuanian independence had not been large; the average was 3,2 inhabitants per 1000. Only in 1927 it had been larger when 18.086 emigrated and in 1929— 15.999. In later years the number of emigrants had not surpassed 1000. Emigration of that period had been to U.S.A., Canada, Union of South Africa, Palestine (mostly Jews) and South America.

The Cathedral of Vilnius (XVII-th cent.) with a medieval tower

Dr. A. Stanys

HISTORICAL SURVEY

First Historic Records. Although the first records of the Lithuanians and the country they inhabited reach back as far as the II century, A. D. (Tacitus), a clearer picture can be obtained only in the IX-th and X-th centuries, while the beginnings of regular Lithuanian written history are only to be found in the early XIII-th century. Since that time we have pretty accurate knowledge of the land of Lithuanian, their way of living, and the development of their State. Thus, we can say that written Lithuanian history extends over a period of 700 years.
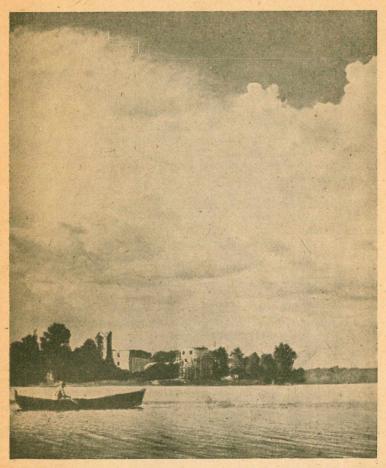
Origin and Borders. The Lithuanians belong to the same Indo-European group of poeples as most of the European nations. Where they have come from is not known. They live between the Slav and Germanic poeples but belong to neither of these groups. Of all living European nations only the Latvians are kin to them, the forefathers of both nations— the so-called Balts— having populated the whole shore of the Baltic Sea from the river Vistula to far beyond the river Dauguva (Dvina). The historic eastern borders of their settlements are not

quite definitely known. The archeological material as well as the traces of the Baltic languages lead us to half-way between Smolensk and Moscow. Later on (in the VII-th and VIII-th centuries) pressed by the Slav expansion, the boundary was moved westward, say to the line separating the basins of the Dnieper and the Nemunas rivers. The southern borders of the Baltic settlements are lost in the marshy districts of the Pripet and follow the Bug and Narev rivers up to the present Mazurian-Prussian border as far as the river Vistula. Thus, East Prussia is but the homeland of the third member of the family of the Balts — the Old-Prussians or Borussians, who are therefore related to the Latvians and Lithuanians. In the XIII-th century East Prussia was conquered by the Teutonic Knights and Germanized, only those of its inhabitants who lived in its Eastern part, influenced by the neighbouring Lithuanian central body have remained true Lithuanians to this day.

The Order of the Teutonic Knights of Saint Mary was a monastic as well as a military organization, founded in Palestine during the Crusades. Its members were German Crusaders who had set out to fight the Infidels. When the Christians were driven out of Asia Minor, the Teutonic Order withdrew to Europe and settled in Prussia (1226—1230). Supported by the German emperor and other German sovereigns as well as aided by all the Germanic world, this order of professional soldiers succeeded in the course of 50 years in subduing the Prussian country between the Vistula and Nemunas rivers and in establishing its own well organized State.

Having settled in Prussia, the Order immediately began to support the military enterprises of the German colony in Livonia (Latvia) which had been founded there in the middle of the XII-th century. Desiring to create a vast State of its own, the Order tried to expand its boundary as far as Livonia, but here it met with the well organized and powerful Lithuanian State which was determined to defend every inch of its territory.

Struggles with the Teutonic Order and Growth of the Lithuanian State.
The Teutonic Order which had vowed to fight the enemies of Christ in Palestine, again used Christian slogans when they decided to expand their territory on the shores of the Baltic Sea. Owing to the German political and social relations of those times, the Order received willing support from all Europe against the peaceful poeple whom they dubbed the "Saracens of the North". Reacting upon their calls for help, not only numerous adventurous knights but even kings and princes with their armies arrived to fight for the Order's cause. But this formidable military enterprise failed. Not only did the Teutonic Order not succeed in conquering the whole of the Lithuanian country, but they were not even able to annex that small part of it which lay between the Prussian possessions of the Knights and their Livonian colony.

The Castle of the Grand-Dukes on an island in the Lake of Trakai

The struggle between the Lithuanians and the Order continued for a hundred and fifty years. In Lithuanian history this is an epoch of heroism, critical moments and glorious victories. The Order proclaimed that they were fighting for the Christian world, and after every failure the alarm was raised in the western countries that the pagan Lithuanians were a threat to all the Christians in Eastern Europe, and that, if they were not stopped, they would over-run the whole European continent. After such misrepresentations of facts new crowds of adventurers and knights, who naively believed that they would save their souls by their prowess, arrived not only from Germany but even

from France and England. But to the Lithuanians this meant a struggle for their liberty, culture, and religion. That is why they displayed such an amazing power of resistance and not only succeeded in keeping the Order out of their territory but even managed to expand their eastern boundaries, taking advantage of the disorder in the Russian provinces. Thus, up to the beginning of the XV-th century, the Lithuanian frontier in the east passed not far from Moscow and the southern frontier reached the shores of the Black Sea.
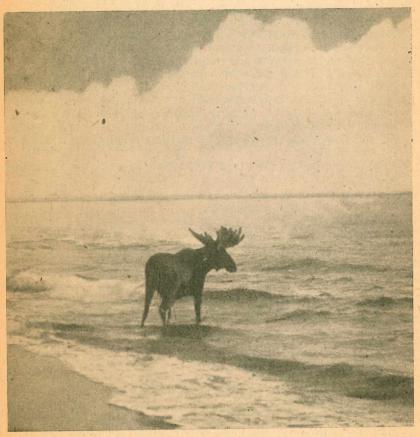
Lithuania became the greatest and most powerful East European state. It is true that this state was not centralized but rather a union of half independent principalities or duchies, but its head was the Lithuanian ruler. No vital changes were made in the system of government of the conquered Russian provinces; often the original rulers were allowed to remain as vassals of the Lithuanian over-lords. Lithuania derived great material profit as well as military reinforcements from these territories for her struggle against the Teutonic Order.

Relations with Western Europe and Conversion to Christianity. The Lithuanians were heathens up to the XIV-th century. They worshipped the mysterious powers of nature and believed in sacrificing to them. Meanwhile all the neighbouring countries had already embraced the Christian religion. The Russians living within and beyond the Lithuanian borders professed the Orthodox religion and were influenced by the culture of the Byzantine Empire.

Western Christianity— the Roman Catholic Church— was represented by the German Order, the old enemy of Lithuania, and the Poles. A considerable part of the population of the Lithuanian Grand-Duchy (as the Lithuanian State was known in the XIV-th and XV-th centuries) consisted of the followers of the Eastern Church, but the Lithuanians were not impressed by the stiff eastern culture: they always felt drawn towards the dynamic West. To share this longed-for western culture they had to embrace Christianity, for no cultural intercourse could exist between Christians and heathens. The Lithuanian statesmen had often thought of this idea but there had always been one grave obstacle: the policy of the German Order according to which there was only one way to become Christian, namely, to submit to their rule. Officially claiming to be servants of the Church, they really aimed at political ends: to keep Lithuania blocked economically and culturally. Controlling the natural outlets of Lithuania to the sea— the mouths of the Nemunas and Dauguva rivers as well as the land routes to the western world, the Order made all communication with Western Europe well-nigh impossible. Considering Lithuanian affairs their own particular business, the Order did not even allow any missionaries to enter the country. No wonder that the Lithuanians clung to their heathen religion for such a long time. When they at last became converted to the tenets of the Western Church, it was not through the efforts of the German Order, which had called them the

greatest enemies of Christiandom, but through the Poles who so far had hardly ever caused them trouble.

End of the Menace of the Teutonic Order. Lithuania was officially proclaimed a Christian State in 1387, a year after her powerful ruler, the Grand-Duke Jogaila had married the Polish Queen Jadvyga and become the King of Poland. Thus contact between Lithuania and Western Europe was finally established and an ally won whose existence was equally endangered. The result was that in less than twenty-five years (1410), the allied Lithuanian and Polish forces, under the leadership of the Lithuanian Grand-Duke Vytautas the Great, defeated the Order so completely, that it never recovered and was

An elk on the sea-shore

finally dissolved in 1525. The Grand Master and most of the members of the Order became Lutherans and their State the Prussian Duchy, was joined to Brandenburg. In 1701 the ruler of both States Prince Frederic, became king of Prussia. Thus the Prussian ralatives of the Lithuanians, who had nothing in common with the Germans, lent their name to the Hohenzollern monarchy which took such a prominent place among the European states in the XVIII-th century and from which the Empire of the German Kaisers developed at the end of the XIX-th century.

Early Relations with Poland. The problem of the relations with Western Europe and the Order having been successfully solved, a new and very difficult problem arose — the problem of the relations with Poland.

Accepting the Polish throne, Jogaiga (in Poland called Wladislaw II, d. 1434) still remained Grand-Duke of Lithuania and thus the danger of Lithuania becoming an integral part of Poland arose. And this was exactly what the Poles were aiming at. The Lithuanian poeple, however, was bitterly opposed to this idea, and Jogaila had to resign the rulership of Lithuania to his cousin, Vytautas the Great (d. 1430), a statesman of a high order, who soon succeeded in making himself quite independent. Under his rule Lithuania's political importance reached its climax. The Lithuania of Vytautas the Great was the mightiest East European State, the influence of which made itself felt throughout Central Europe. Vytautas the Great because of his character and power was chosen king of the Czechs but refused to accept the offered crown.

Vytautas the Great is the most prominent personality in Lithuanian history and he alone has been called the Great.

Personal Union with Poland. During the reign of Vytautas, the accords made with Poland were changed several times and detachment from Poland promoted. It was, for instance, guaranteed that Lithuania would always have her own sovereign. Jogaila's claim to the Lithuanian throne was never upheld by the poeple nor was that of his successors. Nevertheless, Vytautas having died without an heir and since there was no other suitable member of the reigning family, the Lithuanians gave their throne to Jogaila's youthful son Kazimieras (Casimir), whose elder brother Wladyslaw the Poles had chosen for their king. The union with Poland was formally broken but not far long.

When Wladyslaw III suddenly died (1444), the Poles elected his younger brother Kazimieras as their king. After long negotiations, the Lithuanians at last agreed to send their Grand-Duke to Poland (1447). Thus a personal union between the two countries was established, which lasted to the end of Jogaila's dynasty (1572). There was no formal agreement made between the two countries but the personal union was maintained in this way: the Poles used to choose as their king that very member of the royal family whom the Lithuanians had made their Grand-Duke.

Results of the Union with Poland. The union with Poland, although gua-
ranteeing Lithuania safety from that side and providing her with a
natural ally, was nevertheless harmful in many respects. In the first
place, since the common sovereign resided in Cracow (Poland) and
very seldom came to Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, Lithuanian
affairs suffered greatly. This is very clearly seen when we think of
the relations with Moscow.

In the second half of the XV-th century, Russia became a great State
which not only annexed all the Russian territories which did not
belong to the Lithuanian Grand Duchy, but even claimed those under
Lithuanian suzerainty. The struggle for these principalities went on
during almost all the whole of the XVI-th century and ended in a
Russian victory. Although Moscow's success was weakened later on
but by the treaty of 1582, which ended the long struggle, the Smo-
lensk districts were yielded up to Russia.

Another disadvantage, of the Lithuanian-Polish Union was of a politi-
cally-social and cultural character.

The old Lithuanian Grand-Duchy had been an absolute monarchy,
while the Poland of the XIV-th century was in fact ruled not by the
sovereign, but by the nobles until in the XV-th — XVI-th centuries,
Poland became a quasi—parliamentary State ruled by the aristocracy
of the country. The Lithuanian nobles were greatly impressed by the
rights and liberties of the Polish nobility and consequently felt drawn
towards them. The Poles, consciously aiming at the fusion of both
States, did whatever they could to lure the Lithuanians to join their
cause. Thus, little by little, state institutions and political principles
after the Polish fashion were established in Lithuania, too. No natural
outcome of the development of the country, these elements of the
Polish regime had a demoralizing and even destructive effect on Li-
thuania. The nobles, formerly such staunch patriots, came to care more
for their own political and social rights than for state affairs. Thus,
the XVI-th century, although considered an age of cultural flowering
and humanistic thought, from a political point of view was a very
critical time.

The Lithuanian nobles did not desire the fusion of the two countries
but constantly fighting for their own rights, and with considerable
success, they brought their State ever closer to Poland, thus actually
paving the way for such an end. At length, the last member of the
ruling dynasty, Zigmantas Augustas, not wishing the two countries to
separate on his death and strongly influenced by the Poles, had a
number of laws passed in 1563—1566, which assimilated the Lithuanian
form of government, to that of Poland, and conferred on the Lithua-
nian nobles all the rights which the Polish aristocracy enjoyed. Once
this was done, there was no longer any formal reason why Poland
and Lithuania should not become one state. The only obstacles were
the stubborn attempts of the Lithuanian nobles to save the indepen-
dence of their country as well as their own government even though,
in form, it was just like that of the Poles.

A view on Zarasai

Problems of the Union. The XVI-th century in Lithuanian history was an age of paradox. On the one hand, the Lithuanian nobles yearned for equal rights with the Poles and fought for the Polish liberties, on the other hand, they were greatly opposed to the proposed union and the complete fusion of the two countries. To leave this problem undecided was impssible, for Lithuania, worn out by the long struggle with Moscow (from 1500 to 1582), needed the support of Poland, which gave her aid only if there were a union. That is why this question was often raised and discussed, especially in the days of the last king of the Jagellonian dynasty, Zigmantas Augustas (1544—1572). It was feared that on his death there would be no candidate to the throne who would suit both sides equally well. If these fears proved true, and no common sovereign could be found, the relations between the two countries would, very probably, be severed.

Therefore the most urgent problem to be settled was that of a common ruler, but neither this nor any other important question received a satisfactory solution, the points of view of the two countries being diametrically opposed. The Lithuanians agreed to have a common ruler and even a joint parliament to decide matters concerning both countries but all the rest was to be left to their own discretion. The Poles, however, demanded complete fusion of the two states.

The Union of 1569. After numerous unsuccessful attempts to find a solution, this problem was at last settled in a joint parliamentary session in 1589, held in Lublin for this special purpose. A decision was reached but only after long debates and only because of the critical political situation.

The Lithuanian representatives held to their point of view, repeatedly broke off the discussions and even left Lublin, when their propositions were not accepted. Then Zigmantas Augustas, urged on by the Poles, decided to proclaim the union of both countries by a special royal decree, without the consent of the Lithuanian representatives. But before doing so, Zigmantas Augustas joined some districts of the Lithuanian Grand-Duchy (Volhynia, Podolia, and others) to Poland and made the nobles of this territory take the Polish oath of allegiance.

Because of the danger of a new war with Moscow and because there was no hope of aid from anyone else as well as because of the pressure exerted by their own ruler, the Lithuanians could not risk an armed conflict with the Poles and returned to Lublin. Their position was naturally very weakened, and they could not expect to attain much. Nevertheless the act of July 1st, 1569 was not a full success for the Poles, either; it was much more in the nature of a compromise. In it the fusion of the two states into a single organism was declared but otherwise each country was assured of an entirely separate organization which would work quite independently. The act also stated that both countries were to have one commonly chosen sovereign and a common parliament but that each country should have separate army,

separate law-courts and fiscal organizations, distinct laws, separate state-seals, without which no document of the particular country was legal, separate central and provincial organizations and clearly defined borders.

Lithuanian during the Period of the Union. As already mentioned, the act, proclaiming the junction of Poland and Lithuania, did not really fuse the two states into one. The liberty-loving Lithuanians continually widened the breach. In fact, many measures of the Act of Union were never applied. For instance, the articles of the old Lithuanian Statute dealing with the problem of the undesirable settlement of the Poles in Lithuania, were not abolished although the Lithuanians had been told to do so, and when the third revised edition of the Statute was issued, these articles remained (1588).

Therefore the Poles were treated like all other foreigners and could neither fill a government post nor own land. No wonder that only a small number of Polish families took root in Lithuania.

Another article of the act stated that the same currency should be used in both countries, but nothing of the kind was done. The Lithuanian gold currency remained, as formerly 20% dearer than the Polish, and the Lithuanian state treasurer was so particular that he did not permit the King (until 1646) to use in Poland the funds he received from Lithuania. If he wished to spend them, he had to come to Lithuania. Besides that, the armies hat not only separate leaders but

Pažaislis' Monastery on the river Nemunas

were not even allowed to cross the border between the countries without the special permission of the parliament.

The relations between Lithuania and Poland were maintained through the common ruler and the common parliament. But even this parliament was not really unified, each State having affairs and concerns of its own and separate rights as well. Thus the parliament, which managed the affairs of the two separately organized countries, was in fact composed of two parts: the representatives of each country, while seeing to their own interests and their own Statute, watched the other party, in order to be sure that nothing was done that would be opposed to their interests. Even the regulation stating that no separate parliamentary sessions should be held was violated. Even in the XVIII-th century the Lithuanian parliament used to meet, special sessions were held before the common sessions in Poland and decisions regarding the political attitude of the country were made. It can rightly be said that the sessions in Poland bore the character of international conferences and that although the same kind of government machinery functioned in both countries, the rights of each government extended only over its own particular territory. Not a single official could make decisions concerning both countries. Even the king's courtiers who accompanied him to Lithuania, used to be substituted by Lithuanian nobles on passing the frontier and vice versa. This form of government of the Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth continued until the independence of both countries came to an end. Plans to fuse the two countries completely, made during the reform period shortly before that time, were never realized.

The Union as an Element of Polonization. The period of the Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth was one of gradual decay. According to the Polish example, one class — the nobles — prevailed granting no political rights whatever to the other classes. Although stubbornly guarding the country's independence, the nobles, nevertheless, acted in union with the Poles on the social platform. As soon as the common ruler tried to strengthen his position, the nobles of both countries rose like one man, one class, one nation, thus tending to form one community. Since the origin of this class ideology was Polish and had developed in Poland, its etiquette was Polish too and was gradually taken over by the ruling class of XVIII-th century Lithuania. Constantly communicating with the Poles, the Lithuanian nobles became used to speaking Polish and even began to be called Poles, because they participated in the "liberties" (i. e. rights) of the Polish nobility. On the other hand, they never forgot that they were members of the Lithuanian State, the independence of which they were always ready to defend. No wonder that this dual ideology of the XVII-th and XVIII-th centuries did great harm to the national individuality of the people as such and prepared the ground for the later denationalization and separation of the nobility from the common poeple.

St. Peter's and St. Paul's Church in Šiauliai
(XVII-th century)

Demoralization of the Upper Class and Decay of the State. The one-class
form of government of the country produced a deteriorating effect
upon the upper classes as well. Proud of their position and constantly
engaged in defending their rights, and liberties, the Lithuanian as
well as the Polish nobles became demoralized. Nothing mattered ex-
cept their egoistic selves. The Polish King and Lithuanian Grand-
Duke, although chosen by the nobles, was powerless. Even the throne
became an object of speculation and fell to the wealthiest pretendant,
who succeeded in bribing the greater number of influential poeple.
The longer this went on, the more the national idea suffered. In the
XVII-th century, the nobles made every effort to evade their duties to

the State, while in the XVIII-th century, they began to consider it as only a convenient source of enrichment. Everyone's aim was to get the most influential post possible and to govern as many public estates as he could get hold of. This struggle for influence and profitable posts developed into a constant fight of each noble against his brother nobles, in some cases even bearing the character of civil war. Such conditions gave the neighbouring States ample possibility of intruding into the internal affairs of both Poland and Lithuania and thus complicating their life still more. Their prestige and international position became more and more weakened, untill they were finally lost. Towards the end of the XVIII-th century attempts were made to save the situation and to introduce reforms strengthening the government's position, but it was too late. The neighbouring states, pretending to protect the rights of the nobles (1772, 1793 and 1795), tore pieces from the live body of both countries and appropriated them. Each one of them (Russia, Prussia, and Austria) got a piece of Poland while almost the whole of Lithuania was annexed by Russia, only a comparatively small territory west of the river Nemunas being joined to Prussia.

Final Polonization of the Nobility under Russian Rule. Lithuania steps over the threshold of the XIX-th century under Russian rule. The left bank of the river Nemunas, the province of Sudavia, had been joined to Prussia when the Lithuanian State fell to pieces. In 1807 Napoleon, creating the Duchy of Warsaw, joined this territory to it, and in 1815 this district came into the hands of the Russian Czars. When, after the rebellion of 1831, the Polish Kingdom gradually began to disintegrate, Sudavia became the simple province of Suvalkai. The relations between the social classes in Lithuania, nevertheless, remained the same. The peasantry bore the yoke of serfs with no rights whatever, while the townsmen were not numerous. In official life only the old nobles played a role. They desired to regain their lost independence, and believing that this was possible only if they acted jointly with the Poles, they became more and more assimilated. No political activity being possible in Prussian and Austrian occupied Polish territory, Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, became the Polish political and cultural centre. The University of Vilnius became the very heart of Polish cultural action and, since it supervised all the schools at that time, began spreading the Polish language and spirit throughout the land, believing this to be the only means of successfully opposing and frustrating all efforts to Russianize the country.

The first to be Polonized in the early XIX-th century were the schoolchildren, i. e. the children of the nobles. This generation was educated in the spirit of the old commonwealth and spoke Polish. The Lithuanian and Polish nobles kept together even in emigration. Two rebellions (in 1831 and 1863) took place. These rebellions cost many lives and, alas, resulted in the utter defeat of the Lithuanians and the Poles.

After the first rebellion, the University of Vilnius was closed and various restrictive measures taken; after the second rebellion, the restrictions took on the character of persecutions. All the still existing rights of the nobles were abolished and systematic Russification begun. This time it was the turn of the common poeple whom the Russians felt sure they could succeed in Russianizing, the influence of the nobility having disappeared. A year before the second revolt (1862) serfdom was abolished, and all serfs were freed by 1863. The Czarist regime was convinced that it would be easy work to Russianize the Lithuanian peasant who had just been freed from bondage. Nowhere in all Russia were the peasantry more supported by the State than in Lithuania, and conflicts between the big landowners and the peasants, were, as a rule, becided in favour of the latter. The Russian policy was to destroy the power of the rich Polonized landowners, who had so far ruled Lithuania, and to rely on the mass of the peasants in order to attain their purposes. But they were mistaken. The mass of the Lithuanian peasantry opposed the policy of the government to Russianize them much more passionately than the nobles did. And it is then that the fierce struggle for Lithuanian national and cultural rights began to develop into the struggle for political liberty and ended in the reestablishment of independent Lithuania.

The Lithuanian National Movement and the Nobles. As has already been pointed out, the old Lithuania had in the course of time become a state ruled by one class only, namely, the nobles and it was only this class that manifested itself in the political and public life of the country, while the mass of the peasantry (the percentage of townsmen was insignificant) led the life of serfs with no political rights. Through their intercourse with the Poles, through their common class interests with the Polish nobility and through the common fight for their lost independence, the Lithuanian nobles had become completely Polonized and had turned away from their national culture as well as their own national ideals. A tragic rift had taken place. The poeple were left without any leadership. Fighting against the Russification of the country, the Lithuanian nobles made common cause with the Poles and considered the struggle of the common poeple for their Lithuanian culture and ideals as an unreasonable splitting of power or in other words "Lituanomania". No doubt, this circumstance was a grave obstacle in the way of the Lithuanian national movement but it was not strong enough either to stop or to break it.

New Leaders. During the rule of the Polonized Lithuanian nobility Lithuanian culture could manifest itself only among the common poeple and, up to the first half of the XIX-th century, among the lesser gentry, which had not become entirely Polonized. It can be easily understood that under such conditions neither national Lithuanian literature nor national art could flourish. But with the beginning of the XIX-th century the number of educated poeple of common ex-

St. Peter's and St. Paul's Church in Vilnius

traction began to grow steadily and these poeple took an ever increasing part in the struggle for their national rights. With the abolition of serfdom and the admission of peasant children to schools, the number of educated poeple grew by leaps and bounds. This fact coinciding with the intensified wave of Russification after the revolt of 1863, the necessary national Lithuanian leaders were not wanting at that critical moment.

Attempts at Russification. Having destroyed the power of the nobles, the Czarist Government immediately tried to take the common poeple in hand. The Polish schools which had so far been run exclusively for the children of the nobility, were Russified and nationalized by the Government. The Lithuanian country schools were also closed and the children advised to attend the newly organized Russian elementary schools where even religions instruction was not permitted in Lithuanian. Russian was everywhere made the official language. All organizations and meetings were prohibited. In fact, everything was prohibited which could possibly hinder the Russification of the country and alienate it from Russia or the Orthodox Confession. Thus no permission was granted to build new Catholic churches or to repair old ones; no way-side crosses, which had so far been such a characteristic feature of the country, could be erected. All church processions were prohibited and the priests forbidden to deliver public sermons. Besides, 32 churches, 52 chapels and about 20 monasteries were closed at one sweep, the accusation being that they were suspected of having taken part in the revolt. Everywhere Russian colonists, imported in ever growing numbers were given privileges.

The Struggle for the Lithuanian Press. The attempts of the Czarist Government to Russianize the country were crowned by the infamous prohibition in 1864 to print Lithuanian books and newspapers in Latin characters. The Government itself began printing Lithuanian prayer-books and other religions literature in Russian characters. The text having been intentionally changed in some places and Orthodox liturgical prayers truly inserted, not only all the Lithuanian community but even those of the clergy who had become partially Polonized, rose in protest. Thus a most intense struggle for the Lithuanian printed word began. No one would even touch the books that were either very cheaply or even gratuitously distributed by the Government. Parents refused to send their children to school and taught them in their mother-tongue, at home, although they were persecuted and severely punished if caught in so doing. Since no Lithuanian books could be printed openly, steps were taken to print them in secret, and they were soon being smuggled from abroad, mostly from neighbouring East Prussia, and privately sold among the poeple. During a period of forty years until the prohibition was lifted, hundreds and even thousands of devoted patriots made book smuggling their life-work. Although many a Lithuanian "book-carrier" suffered imprisonment or deportation to far-off Si-

The Church of Pažaislis' Monastery (XVII-th century)

biria, this activity never ceased, but, on the contrary, gained in intensity. During forty years the whole country was secretly supplied with religious and secular literature as well as with periodicals from abroad, which not only gave the Lithuanian movement its particular character but even directed it. It is only natural that the men and women who produced, smuggled and circulated Lithuanian books, at the risk of their lives, are greatly honoured by the poeple. Some

A spinner

of these veterans who lived to see Lithuania independent, were given high honours and pensions.

The Participants in the Struggle for National Rights. The main Lithuanian endeavour at the end of the XIX-th century and the beginning of the XX-th century, was first of all a struggle for the printed word. But this does not mean that the whole of the Lithuanian problem had been forgotten. On the contrary, it was this very problem that was discussed in the secret press as well as by private organizations. The Lithuanian community consisted of various differing groups and political parties, but everyone took an equal share and interest in the struggle for the national rights. The leaders were naturally the educated poeple who were constantly increasing in number. These patriots devoted their lives to the national interests. Possessing very little — they were the children of hard-working peasants — these poeple sacrificed the little they had for the common cause. The conditions of life were hard. No Lithuanian, no matter what his profession was, was allowed to hold a public appointment in his native country. Prospects for various specialists to live in the Russia of those days were excellent, because the country was very backward, but Lithuanian students used to choose only professions which gave them the hope of staying in Lithuania and thus having the possibility of participating in the national struggle. Thus most of the young poeple studied medicine, the law or theology and became physicians, lawyers or priests. None of these occupations was very profitable but they enabled poeple to reside in Lithuania and to work for the good of their compatriots.

First Results. The great sacrifices and the resistance of the whole nation frustrated the efforts of the Czarist Government. This failure to Russify the country was already clearly evident at the close of the XIX-th century but, not wishing to admit defeat, the Government did not abrogate the decree prohibiting the printing of books nor the other restrictive measures. Only in the critical moment when Russia was involved in war with Japan and the threat of political trouble arose in the whole of the Russian Empire, was the p r o - h i b i t i o n o f p r i n t i n g L i t h u a n i a n b o o k s l i f t e d on the 7-th of May, 1904. After the revolt of 1905, which had repercussions in Lithuania as well, the Lithuanian poeple were given certain liberties. The demands of the Lithuanian congress which, during the general revolutionary movement, assembled in Vilnius December 4-th to 6-th, 1905, that t h e c o u n t r y b e g i v e n a u t o n o m y, were not satisfied. Nevertheless a certain change of circumstances made a wider cultural and political activity possible. Therefore, by the time World War I broke out in 1914, great progress had been made in culture, politics and organization.
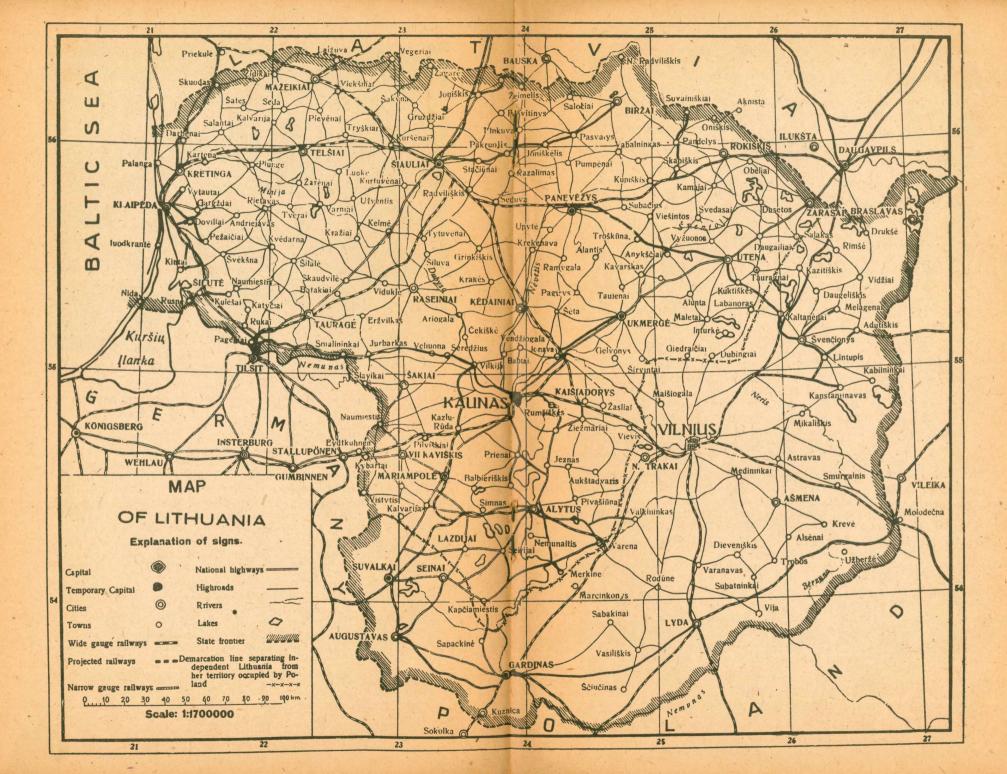
World War I and the Declaration of Independence. The first World War inflicted deep wounds on Lithuania. The country which during 1914

The baroque St. Casimir's Church and the Town-Hall (neo-classic) of Vilnius

and 1915 was the battle ground of the Russian and German armies, was sadly devastated. The poeple then had to endure a long and cruel German occupation. Many of the inhabitants were forced to flee to Russia where certain of their organizational centres were also transferred. But the great majority of the people stayed in Lithuania and many of the cultural and other centres of national life remained in Vilnius. At first none of these centres could deal with politics. Those in Russia were bound by war restrictions and besides had their hands full in just caring for the destitute and homeless mass of their compatriots, while the centres left in Lithuania were restricted by the severe occupation regime which forbade cultural not to speak of political activity. Things improved somewhat when the Czar was dethroned after the revolution of 1917, and the Germans began to have doubts about their victory. When the President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, declared that every nation must be given the right to self-determination, the Germans, knowing the Lithuanian desire to free themselves from the Russian yoke, undertook certain actions which were to bind Lithuania to Germany. If they succeeded in their aim, they felt sure they would be given Lithuania at the Peace Conference. With this in mind, per-

MAP OF LITHUANIA

MAP

OF LITHUANIA

Explanation of signs.

Capital		National highways ———
Temporary Capital		Highroads ———
Cities		Rrivers
Towns	○	Lakes
Wide gauge railways		State frontier
Projected railways	- - -	Demarcation line separating independent Lithuania from her territory occupied by Poland —x—x—x—
Narrow gauge railways		

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 km.

Scale: 1:1700000

BALTIC SEA

Kuršių Įlanka

GERMANY

LATVIA

RUSSIA

POLAND

KAUNAS

VILNIUS

KÖNIGSBERG

INSTERBURG

WEHLAU

GUMBINNEN

STALLUPÖNEN

TILSIT

KLAIPĖDA

Palanga

KRETINGA

ŠILUTĖ

TELŠIAI

ŠIAULIAI

PANEVĖŽYS

BIRŽAI

ROKIŠKIS

ILUKŠTA

DAUGAVPILS

ZARASAI

BRASLAVAS

UTENA

UKMERGĖ

KĖDAINIAI

RASEINIAI

TAURAGĖ

ŠAKIAI

VII KAVIŠKIS

MARIAMPOLĖ

ALYTUS

LAZDIJAI

SUVALKAI

SEINAI

AUGUSTAVAS

GARDINAS

LYDA

AŠMENA

VILEIKA

N. TRAKAI

KAIŠIADORYS

MAŽEIKIAI

BAUSKA

Nemunas

Nevėžis

Neris

mission was given to summon a Lithuanian Conference from September 18 to 22, 1917, in Vilnius. Unfortunately for the German plans, the assembled representatives of the poeple refused to make the desired declaration. Disappointed in their secret hopes, the Germans, nevertheless, permitted a National Council to be formed, trusting to attain their ends by this means. Fearing that all activity would be prohibited if they did not discuss the above mentioned German plans, the Council agreed to consider the question but did not promise anything saying that only the Constituent Assembly would be competent to decide the matter. During the discussions various forms of relations with Germany were proposed: a personal union with the Prussians, a State governed by a member of the Hohenzollern dynasty and bound to Germany by various conventions, etc. Convinced that they could not get the Germans to agree to an absolutely independent Lithuania, and certain that the defeat of Germany was inevitable the National Council decided to declare Lithuania an independent democratic state, free from all ties with Germany or any other state. This happened on February 16-th, 1918.

This proclamation, which was announced to the world through secret channels, was the foundation on which the independent State was organized later on. It expressed the will of the whole nation and was in accordance with the declarations of the Lithuanians, dispersed abroad. The conference of Lithuanian refugees in Petrograd (June 9-th, 1917) acclaimed this declaration while that of the representatives of Lithuanian oganizations in the United States of America in New York (March 3 and 4, 1918) adressed a petition to the Americam Government requesting it to recognize Lithuania as an independent state. The same request was expressed by all the other Lithuanian emigrant colonies which, meanwhile, acknowledged the Council as the highest organ of the Lithuanian nation.

Difficulties in Establishing the State. The German occupation Government forbade all activity on the part of the Lithuanian National Council. It held to this policy even when the coming defeat of Germany became quite evident and the occupation forces had to withdraw from the country. The Lithuanians at first received no help from outside and had a very hard time in organizing their State. As the demoralized German troops retired, the Russian Red Army occupied a large part of the country, including the capital, Vilnius. The first Lithuanian Government, formed on the 5-th November 1918, had the move from Vilnius to Kaunas. Owing to the extraordinary national enthusiasm and to support obtained chiefly from the United States, it was possible to raise an army and to save the country at the eleventh hour. By the end of 1919 this army had succeeded in driving the Red Army out of Lithuania, and, together with the Latvians, in defeating their other enemy, made up of units of the German army which did not wish to leave the Baltic States and of adherents of Czarist Russia.

Cultural Museum of Vytautas the Great in Kaunas

International Relations. On July 12, 1920 Soviet Russia in the Peace Treaty
signed with Lithuania, recognized the latter as an independent State
with Vilnius as her capital and including the province of Gardinas.
Thus the foundation of friendly relations between these two states
was laid. Unfriendly relations existed between Lithuania and her
Polish neighbour, who in April, 1919, seized the Lithuanian capital
and the part of the Vilnius province by force. In the summer of
1920 the Red Army drove the Poles out of Vilnius and, in accordance
with the Peace Treaty, returned the city to Lithuania.

No sooner had fortune changed in favour of the Poles than latter
reoccupied Vilnius on October, 1920, in spite of the neutrality main-
tained by Lithuania during the Polish-Russian conflict and the
accord they themselves had made with Lithuania under the auspices
of the League of Nations, two days before. Having seized Vilnius
the Poles began to push forward into inner Lithuania. The Lithua-
nian army, taken by surprise, could pass over to attack only by the
second half of November. It was then too late to recover Vilnius,
since a commission of the League of Nations had stopped hostilities
and charged international bodies with the solution of this conflict.
Since the Poles did not acknowledge the competence of any inter-
national body to settle the dispute, Lithuania broke off all relations

with Poland. This state of neither war nor peace existed between Lithuania and Poland up to March, 1938, when a Polish ultimatum demanded the resumption of diplomatic relations, and Lithuania acceded, for the sake of peace.

Owing to the constant intrigues of the Poles, Lithuania was late in taking her place among the states of the world. The United States of America were the first to recognize Lithuania de jure (July 28, 1921). Some months later, she was received into the League of Nations, and in the following year all the other States recognized her. When, in 1923, a special convention of the Allies attributed to Lithuania the Territory of Klaipeda (Memel) which had been detached from Germany by the Treaty of Versailles as preponderantly Lithuanian in character, and had been temporarily administered by France, the Lithuanian international problems except those concerning Vilnius and her territory, were solved. That the Territory of Klaipeda desired to belong to Lithuania was clearly manifested by the revolt of her inhabitants in favour of Lithuania in January, 1923.

Internal Affairs. While still engaged in solving important international problems, internal affairs were not neglected by the Lithuanian Government. On May 15, 1920, the Constituent Assembly met, having been elected by direct, secret, equal vote. After working for two years the Constituent Assembly adopted a Constitution of the country and then dissolved, giving place to the regular parliament, in Lithuanian, Seimas. One of the most important achievements of the Seimas was the Agrarian Reform which revolutionized the country's agricultural economy. The large landed estates were broken up into small farms which were distributed to poeple who either had no land or to little to make farming profitable. The largest units left generally did not exceed 80 hectares (200 acres) The only exceptions were for model farms. This reform affected about 500.000 hectares. It took several years to carry out this plan and during this period the original law was changed permitting units up to 150 hectares. The first as well as the second land reform law provided compensation for the expropriated land.

A very important incident in the economic life of independent Lithuania was the introduction of Lithuanian currency in the autumn of 1922. The monetary unit, the l i t a s , was worth $^1/_{10}$ of a U.S.A. gold dollar.

Having laid a solid foundation for the finances of the country, the successive Lithuanian Governments never swerved from their original careful financial and economic policy and therby saved Lithuania from the economic crises and the wave of inflation which swept almost the whole of Europe.

Under the Czarist regime, Lithuania had been a neglected corner of the enormous but backward Russian Eupire Independent Lithuania was faced with the great problem of making up for 120 years of neglect and forced seperation from Western influences. She had

A girl from Vilnius in national dress

to work hard to raise her cultural and economic level to the better
western standards. For twenty-two years her people laboured un-
remittingly and achieved wonders in both culture and economy. They
worked with energy and enthusiasm, for were they not, at long last,

free again? They, even as their brother Baltic poeples, were prospe-
rous and progressive and had faith in the future.

The Catastrophe. But the skies of Europe which had been darkening
for some time, became completely black. Nazi-Germany was on the
rampage. After Austria and Czecho-Slovakia came the turn of Lith-
uania. In March, 1939, Germany brutally tore the Territory of Klai-
pėda from Lithuania, depriving her of her only good seaport. And
then came the Second World War. The civilized world reeled under
this catastrophe, To Lithuania and her sister Baltic States, the dis-
aster was measureless. They tried desperately to remain neutral,
but that did not save these innocent victims of imperialistic ag-
gression. They lost the exercise of their sovereignty, they had to
suffer three successive foreign occupations, their countries were
terribly ravaged, their poeple in great part dispersed: deported to
the farthermost regions of Siberia, deported for slave labour to
Germany or scattered all over Europe. The War is over but the
unhappy Baltic States are still under foreign rule. Their people
are still struggling despairingly not only for liberty but for life
itself. Their misery is boundless, but they are sustained by faith
in the principles of right and justice proclaimed by the leaders
of the great Western Democracies. They fervently hope that the
day is not far distant when these great principles will be applied
to them, too.

Girls from Klaipèda and Suduva in national dress

B. K.

CULTURAL LIFE IN OUTLINES

Lithuania was situated far from the cultural centres of Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Christianity and written western culture reached Lithuania comparatively late. Thus the main sources of the cultural life of former days are to be sought less in written documents than in the achievements of the poeple — in their language, songs, customs and national art.

Language: Lithuanian is one of the oldest spoken Indo-European languages preserving best the old forms and belonging to the branch of Baltic languages. Lithuania is only kindred to Latvian. Characteristic for Lithuanian is the musical accent. That gives the language melody and harmony. What specially strikes the eye of anyone learning Lithuanian is the great number of diminutive forms and their application. These grammatical forms show the character of the Lithuanian poeple — especially their deep tenderness. An exceptionally large number of these lovely forms may be found in the Lithuanian folksongs.

Folk-Songs. The folk-songs form the largest cultural treasure of the nation. Up to the present, more than 63.000 have been recorded out

of the total number of approximately 200.000 songs. These folk-songs, popular with the poeple of the country-side, have won distinction in the world of literature and have been highly praised by many scholars from abroad. The Lithuanian songs show in a subtile way the whole life of the nation, are a profound interpretation of character and a revelation of the spirit of the Lithuanians. Some of them, centuries old, are as timely and vivid to-day as when they first left their makers lips.
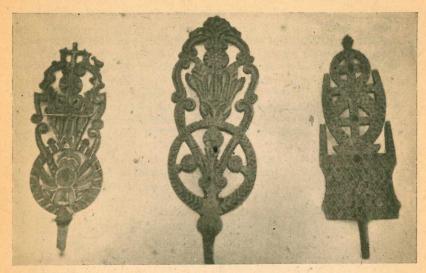
Lithuania is known to her neighbours as a country of songs. The whole life of a Lithuanian, from the cradle to the grave, is accompanied by song. The favourite themes are about the rue garden, the lonely orphan, the love of youth and maid and the love for nature and homeland. Whatever the season of the year, songs are always heard, but they are especially gay during the hay-making season and rye harvesting. Special mention must be made of the lovely wedding-songs where the girl says farewell to the careless days of the past and enters a new life, a life of labour and trouble.

All these popular national songs are full of clever epithets and loving diminutives.

The relations between man and woman are of a noble and pure nature. In them burns an idealism that this world needs. The rue garland is a symbol of chastity, idealized in all these love songs. It is to be stressed that the Lithuanians have only very few war songs, and these are not of an agressive but rather of a defensive nature, chiefly laments for the departure of young men. That corresponds to the character of the poeple and their history. There were no wars of

"... girdles and ribbons, called 'juostos' ..."

"There is such a strong yearning for beauty, that even spinning-wheels are carved"

aggression, but only wars defending the country against German imperialistic movements performed by the Teutonic Knights and against the attacks of other enemies.

The tunes are modulated to the sentiment of their themes with a tinge of melancholy. There are very few gay songs. That is due to the northern type and to all the oppression endured by the Lithuanians through long years. But this restraint of feeling and deep sadness does not denote pessimistic resignation but rather concentrated strength of soul and a deep will to preserve the most precious values of the poeple.

Popular Instrumental Music. The national dances as well as the popular instrumental music can be traced back to the early historical times. Still used in recent days is an old sort of zither, called "kanklės". Then there are instruments ranging from a kind of buck's horn "ragas" and special kind of flutes "triūbos", to very quaint wooden pipes "skudučiai", the last only to be found in Lithuania and made by the shepherds.

Folk-Art. Particular attention should be given to the popular art of w e a v i n g. In Lithuania, through generations, all the clothing was home made. It was an honour and pride for the girls to have as rich a dowry as possible, especially to have numerous "hope-chests" filled with textiles made by herself. Original and various in colour and

wonderful in harmony are the ornaments of the girdles and ribbons called "juostos", adorned with conventionalized flowers and figures. The Lithuanian national taste for art was not restricted to the art of weaving but also included other fields of folk-art. Of special importance was w o o d - c a r v i n g. The cottages of the peasants, especially the porches, doors, shutters and window-frames were adorned with beautiful wood-carving. There is such a strong yearning for beauty in the people, that even articles used in everyday life (spinning-wheels, towel-racks, batlets, household-utensils, dowry chests and wardrobes etc.) are carved and decorated with figures, painted flowers, birds etc.

Another remarkable category of folk-art deserves space here: t h e L i t h u a n i a n w o o d e n c r o s s e s. Lithuania is a country of crosses. The landscape without these crosses is unimaginable. The troublous times endured by the Lithuanian poeple have given the cross more than a deep religious meaning. The cross symbolizes the daily troubles of the poeple as well as its own sad story and gives the

Pieta

St. George

". . . . embellished with various carvings and figures of various Saints . . ."

peasant comfort and strength. These crosses are erected near the cottages, on cross-roads, by the way-side, by streams or in oak-groves. The Lithuanian wooden cross is made with special devotion and passion. It is embellished with various carvings and figures of Our Lord, statues of the Blessed Virgin and of various Saints. These carvings are mostly primitive in their form from the point of view

of art, but frequently very expressive and are very dear to everybody as they are created from the very heart of the Lithuanian. Their beauty is to be sought in their very primitiveness and spiritual depth. Although the crosses are of different types in various regions in Lithuania, all have in common beauty of form and an extraordinary depth of feeling.

Wood-engravings of the Saints also have an important place in the national art of Lithuania. Then there is the interesting custom, which has developed into a separate branch of folk-art: the ornamentation of Easter eggs and of wooden eggs for children by means of carving, scrapings etc. Both are called "margučiai".

Architecture. In Lithuania the chief building material was and still is timber. Thus the oldest architectural monuments made of wood could not be preserved. Only important buildings such as churches, castles, great manor houses, palaces and the residences of the great nobles, built of stone or bricks, show the development of architecture in Lithuania. Beginning with the XIV-th century, when Christianity was introduced in Lithuania, the culture of Western Europe began to supplant the original cultural life of Lithuania and brought the greatest changes to architecture. So there are architectural monuments ranging from the Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, Rôcoco and Neo-classic styles up to the most modern efforts. The most beautiful historic monuments are to be found in the city of Vilnius (Vilna), the capital of Lithuania. The lovely Church of St. Anne, late Gothic in style, the baroque St. Casimir's Church, the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, the most famous of all, with its rich paintings and ornaments by Italien artists, are familiar to all tourists. Original in style is the impressive neo-classic Cathedral and the Town-Hall, designed and constructed by Stoka-Gucevičius, born a Lithuanian serf, an architect of unusual talent. Vilnius is also noted for the picturesque views of the castle (built by the Grand Duke Gediminas) on the hill overlooking the city, and the ancient wall with its medieval towers.

A large number of historic monuments of great architectural value and beauty is to be found throughout the country.

Literature. The first books printed in Lithuania were religious in character and date back to the XVI-th century. There were few secular books printed at first. This is due to the fact that since Christianity was introduced into the country via Poland the nobility took to the Polish language. Politically they were Lithuanian, culturally Polish. (Somewhat as in the XVII-th and XVIII-th centuries, the upper classes in Europe adopted French culture.) One of the best representatives of this group is the well-known autor and poet Adam Mickiewicz (d. 1855). Taking the subject of his poems from Lithuanian history and legend and claiming Lithuania as his "beloved homeland", he, as an aristocrat, wrote his works in Polish. Under these circumstances cultural life made slow progress in Lith-

uania. Men from the lower ranks of society had to emerge and consecrate themselves to the production of literature. One of these who attained considerable fame abroad is Kristijonas Donelaitis (d. 1780), author of the poem "The Year", which gives a vivid picture of life and work in a Lithuanian village. The number of truly Lithuanian poets and men-of-letters increased considerably in the XIX-th century. Two of the best known are the bishop Motiejus Valančius and the historian Simonas Daukantas, who truly deserved well of their country.

The Suppression of Printing. Unfortunately these promising cultural beginnings were suppressed by the Russian government for poltical reasons and in 1864 the printing of Luthianian books and newspapers in Latin characters was forbidden. Books had to be printed elsewhere, in America or in Lithuania Minor, occupied by the Germans, and then they had to be smuggled into Lithuania Major. The Russian authorities persecuted the book-smugglers cruelly. Many of these idealists were imprisoned, still more deported to Siberia. So many books continued to be printed and so many were brought into the

The Churches of St. Anne and St. Bernardins in Vilnius

country, that the Russian government finally realized that it had lost this particular battle.
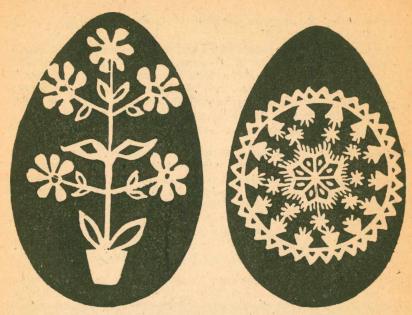
The best-known newspapers edited and printed abroad were "Auszra" (Dawn) from 1883, by Dr. J. Basanavičius and "Varpas" (The Bell) from 1889, by Dr. V. Kudirka. Both newspapers were very popular with the Lithuanian people, very widely circulated in the country and found an immediate response in thousands of Lithuanian hearts. Symbolically, they foretold a brighter future for the nation.

In 1904 thr Tsarist government abolished the restriction of the press.

Lithuania in the XX-century. An intense Lithuanian national cultural movement began with the revolution of 1905. Many newspapers were issued, many books printed. Soon several publishing houses such as "Saulė", "Rytas", "Žiburys", "St. Casimir", had sprung into existence. Lithuanian schools were organized, cultural life began to flourish, but only for a short time. The first World War interrupted the development of the cultural life. The German occupation (government), aiming at the annexation of the Baltic States, did everything possible to hinder national culture in Lithuania.

Education in Independent Lithuania. On February 16-th, 1918, Lithuania declared her independence in Vilnius. A new life began in the field of education. Dispite the dearth of proficient teachers, astonishing progress was achieved during the short time of independent life. As an illustration let us compare education in independent Lithuania with that of Lithuania before the first World War. In tsarist times there were only a few hundred elementary schools, whereas with the coming of independence, elementary education became compulsory and there were soon 7.000 elementary schools attended by 300.000 pupils. Instead of the earlier 25 high schools for the whole of Lithuania, there were now 93, attended by 36.000 pupils. A large number of professional schools: industrial, commercial, agricultural, etc. were established and there were various courses for adults. Where there were formerly no institutions of higher learning now there were eight: the Universities of Kaunas and Vilnius, the Academy of Agriculture in Dotnuva, the Commercial Institute in Klaipėda and later in Šiauliai; the Academy of Fine Arts in Vilnius and the Institute of Applied Art in Kaunas; the Teachers' Training Academy in Klaipėda and later in Vilnius, and an Academy of Music.

Art in Independent Lithuania. Not only schools attained a high level but art also had an extraordinary development. Two permanent operas and a great many state theatres as well as private and amateur ones bear witness of the importance given to stagecraft in Lithuania. Founders of the Lithuanian opera are Šimkus, Karnavičius and Račiūnas These and other composers show many national traits in their productions. In the field of painting the Lithuanian artists distinguished themselves by their original ideas before the first World War. One of the first to win national recognition and

Easter eggs, called "marguĉiai"

fame abroad was M. K. Ĉiurlionis, a painter and musician. He was
a very original genius with extraordinary vigour of expression and
a wonderful eye for colour. As a musician and artist he endeavours
to combine these two elements and achieves very striking effects
and a symbolism remarkable for its depth.
Sculpture, painting and the graphic arts were fostered at the School of
Applied Art in Kaunas and at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vilnius.
While in sculpture and graphic art many of the artists are inspired
by folk art, some of the younger painters have given themselves
heart and soul to the trends of Western art.

Literature. Lithuanian creative writing began with patriotic romanti-
cism, then developed to realism and psychological romanticism. The
lyrical poets are perhaps the finest writers in Lithuanian literature.
The greatest of the present-day poets Brazdžionis and Aleksandriškis,
have revealed in their verse special apptitudes for deep emotion
and poetical vision. There is something in their poems that trans-
cends the common boundaries. Very popular among the older poets
and authors are Maironis, with his brilliant technique, Vaižgantas
with his national idealism, and Krėve-Mickevičius, romantic and
realist, who writes out of a profound and intimate acquaitance
with the poeple and the country he loves.

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Wooden crosses on a hill

Well-known in Lithuania are also the poet and novelist Putinas whose high place in Lithuanian letters rests to-day upon his novel "Altorių Šešėlyje" (In the Shadow of the Altar); Sruoga, poet and playwright, who is also a well-known critic and Vienuolis, whose short stories are notable for structural balance and sound judgement of character. All of these have found a permanent place in Lithuanian literature. Some of their books are translated into foreign languages. Modern movements of literature from abroad achieved no or very littte popularity in Lithuania. They have been ever since very unpopular with the conservative character of the people.

Conclusion. The whole cultural life of Lithuania flourished during the last twenty years of independence and attained, as mentioned above, a high level, until the Second World War once more brought to a standstill its development. Many of our nationals had to leave their homeland or were forced to Germany and are dispersed all over Western Europe, hoping once to return into a free, democratic and independent Lithuania.

Girls raking

J. Jatulionis and A. Mazulis

ECONOMIC RELATIONS

I. Agriculture

Lithuania has always been an agricultural country, due to her geographical position and her climate. She has almost no natural resources which could give a foundation for the establishment of a strong industry, but the soil and climate are favourable for agriculture. Approximately 60% of the wohle territory is suitable for farming, that is, about 3.500.000 hectares (one hectare equals 2,48 acres). Of that area 52% is plough-land, 14% meadows, 12% pastures, 16% occupied by farm buildings and gardens and 4% miscellaneous. 79% of the population are occupied in farming. The remaining 21% have other occupations, most of them indirectly connected with agriculture.

Old Farming Methods. Lithuanian agriculture may be divided into two distinct periods: before and after World War I. In the first period the Lithuanians lived according to a system carried over from the Middle Ages. Ferfdom, prevailing in the XVI-th century, had been abolished but the peasants were finally freed only in 1861—1865. The greater part of the land belonged to large estates up to the restoration of Lithuania as an independent State. Both on the estates which possessed most of the better land and in the peasant holdings the so called three-field system was prevalent: one-third was fallow land, one-third sown with winter grain and one-third with spring grain and plantings. During the 120 years before World War I, Lithuania was occupied by the Russians, whose farming methods were of a more primitive nature; the Russian government did not attempt to develop modern agricultural methods. Therefore Lithuanian agriculture produced only grain at the beginning of the XX-th century, as it had done for the last three or four years. Since farming equipment and tools were very primitive and crude, mostly made by peasant craftsmen, and mineral fertilizers were seldom used, the yield of the crops was comperatively low. Only enough was produced for the country's demands, nothing was left for export. Only draft animals were kept or those required for food.

New Methods. After World War I and the restoration of the independent Lithuanian State, there was a fundamental change. The whole political, cultural and economical life was orientated to the West.

A typical farm in Lithuania

"... fine new homesteads with modern buildings were created ..."

Naturally, agriculture had to change its character and production completely. Soon after the war Western Europe felt the lack of live—stock products, especially fats. Since the grain markets were filled by the Danube countries, other countries started producing live-stock products. Lithuania set herself the same goal.

As it was impossible to raise live-stock by the three-field system, the partition of villages into seperate homesteads was begun. The land of the large estates under a land reform act was given to the peasants, who worked the land.

In 1920 a temporary land reform act was passed and in 1922 the basic land reform law for the partitioning of large estates was promulgated. The landowners were allowed to retain 80 hectares; this norm was later raised to 150 hectares while the rest of the land was divided among the volunteers who fought for the independence of Lithuania and among other landless peasants. The new farms were between 8 and 15 hectares in size according to the quality of the soil. After dividing the village lands and carrying out the land reform, fine new homesteads with modern buildings were created. Lithuania then started the production of dairy products and live-stock. Instead of the extensive three-field system, the 6 to 10-field system was adopted, and some farmers used the Norfolk four-field system. Mineral ferti-lizers were widely used. Agriculture was made more intensive through the whole period of Lithuanian independence and made great pro-gress. Changing over from the primitive methods of farming Lithuania

became one of the world's best agricultural countries in respect to the quality and quantity of its food exports.

The grain mostly grown in Lithuania is wheat, rye, barley, oats, and spring-wheat. In districts were soils are heavier, clover is sown with grain, which can then be cut for two years. Legumes sown in Lithuania are mainly peas and vetches. Root-crops are potatoes, turnips and cattle-turnips. In districts were the soil is light, seradele, lupines and buckwheat are sown. In districts where the soil is heavy, potatoes are only planted for domestic needs, but where the soil is light, they are planted in great quantities in order to serve the metropolitan areas. The vegetables mostly planted are cabbage, carrots and beets; in lesser quantities, onions, and turnips; in small quantities cauliflowers, tomatoes, radishes and celery. Lithuania started to grow industrial plants but recently.

For centuries large quantities of flax were grown in Lithuania, but due to improper fertilizing and care its grade was not very high. In independent Lithuania, more interest was shown in this culture. The seed was improved, the soil properly fertilized, and the flax then obtained was much better. In 1933 farmers began to grow sugar beets; three modern sugar refineries were built. Due to the short vegetation period and lack of sunlight the Lithuanian sugar beets were not very high in sugar content; but here again improving the seeds and fertilizing the soil properly helped and the sugar content of Lithuanian grown beets greatly increased. Just before World War II, the growing of tobacco was begun, but not enough was grown to satisfy domestic needs even though the crops were satisfactory. Other plants suitable for industry were soy-beans and hemp. The crops of these plants were used for domestic needs

Live-Stock. As mentioned before, after World War I, Lithuanian farming was reorganized for live-stock breeding. In 1939, per 100 hectares of productive land there were: horses — 19, cattle — 42, milk-cows —28, sheep — 21, pigs — 44.

As the Lithuanian farms are but little mechanized, horses are extensively used as draft-animals. Other animals are not used for draft purposes. On small farms, farmers have no opportunity to utilize to the full the horses they possess, therefore there is a surplus of horses in Lithuania.

Horse-breeding in Lithuania has a historical background. There is still a breed left of the only pure Lithuanian horses, called "Žemaitukai". Horses of this breed are small, usually up to 120 cm (4 feet); they weigh from 350 to 400 kg, their colour is mostly brown and they are of a lively nature. They are descended from Arabian horses. They can stand very poor conditions and are contented with common feed. On account of these qualities they are very suitable for keeping on small Lithuanian farms. There were very few pure-blooded Žemaitukai left but special government horse-breeding centres started to breed them again. The breed of horses in Lithuania was systematically im-

proved by importing thoroughbreds from abroad. In the beginning many Belgian heavy-type horses were imported, and later not a few Trakėnai. Besides some Arabian and English thorough breds were also imported. In this way two types of breeds were created: the heavier type, suitable for work in heavier soils, and the lighter breed, for lighter soils. Quite recently, the surplus of horses was being exported abroad for meat.

A wooden-cross nearby an old farm

Before World War I little attention had been given to live-stock and dairy products. During the war, most of the animals were destroyed, therefore after the war the raising of cattle had to be organized anew. The milk production of Lithuanian local cattle was low. Due to improper feeding and care, the local milk-cows' milk producing period did not exceed 4 to 5 months, and the production did not exceed 300 to 400 kg, of milk per cow per year. But those cows had good resistance to the local climate and poor fodder. In order to improve the local cattle breed, the Dutch black-and-white and the Danish brown breed were imported. The results of these efforts were soon apparent. In 1939, the average production of Lithuanian milk-cows reached from 1.500 to 2.000 kg of milk per year, and the production of realy good cows of which a record was kept, from 9.000 to 10.000 kg. In 1939 and 1940, the average content of butter-fat in milk of the local black-and-white breed was 3,3% and from the local brown breed— 3,6%. Undoubtedly the cattle were improved not only by importing pro-

ductive animals, but also by selection of the local breed and by systematical improvement in feeding and care. The effort to improve the live-stock was largely due to the work of specially organized live-stock or associations.

In Lithuania there was no special production of beef-cattle. The local beef requirements were supplied from old cattle and from the surplus of young live-stock.

Most of the milk was used for making butter. Before World War I, butter for the cities and towns was produced on the large estates and at that time there was no export. In independent Lithuania, dairy co-operatives were organized on the Danish system, and the quality of the butter. Butter produced in the modern dairies was sent for control to cold storage warehouses. Here the butter was graded and finally prepared for export. The production of cheese was on a small scale, just enough for the domestic market. In addition to butter and cheese, the poduction of condensed milk and milk powders was begun just before Worl War II.

The Lithuanian dairies returned the skim-milk to the farmers who used it as protein feed for raising of pigs. As milk production increased, the raising of pigs increased, too. In addition to fats (butter) requirments, the world market had a large demand for meat, which caused the Lithuanian government to urge the farmers to raise ever increasing numbers of pigs. For improvement of the local pig-breed, many pure-bred Yorkshire pigs were imported from Denmark and England. After the breeds were improved, Lithuanian pork products attained a high reputation in the world markets. The Lithuanian farmers raised sheep only for their own needs and comparatively little was done to improve the breeds. Sheep were raised for wool and meat but sheep-keeping was gradually decreasing.

Small Branches of Farming. After the more important branches of agriculture were reorganized, more attention was paid to the various small branches of farming, which were well on the way to becoming quite important in Lithuanian life. In the first days of Lithuanian independence eggs were only supplied for the local markets, but before World War II, the country had a large income from the egg export. Poultry-keeping was constantly and systematically developed by selection of the local hen-breed and also by improving the feeding conditions and care. The most popular breeds of chickens were the white Leghorn and Rhode Island Red breeds. To improve the breed of chickens a hatching station was established in Lithuania, the largest in the Baltic States, which hatched and distributed over 6.000.000 chicks per year. At the station there was a large poultry farm, where experiments were made in raising and feeding chickens. Other domestic birds widely raised in Lithuania were geese; turkeys and ducks were raised in lesser numbers.

Lithuanian farmers like bee-keeping. This is often called the poetry of farming. But bees are kept more for personal pleasure than profit. The production of honey had not increased to a great extent. It was

General Post Office in Kaunas

mostly used for the family's own needs. Widely known is the ancient Lithuanian national beverage, "midus" or mead, once so popular in the Germanic countries.

Exports. In the last few years before World War II Lithuania produced 110% of the food products necessary for the feeding of its population. This production is the largest of all European countries. Even, for example, Denmark, whose agriculture was on such a high scale, managed to produce only 106% of the food products necessary for its population.

Only Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Argentina and some other countries of the Americas had a surplus larger than that of Lithuania. Up to 1934 most of Lithuania's agricultural products were sent to Germany, later close commercial relations were established with England and more than 80% of all the exports were sent to Great Britain. Lithuania exported chiefly meat, meat-products and live-stock. The largest item being pork in the form of bacon for which Lithuania became well known. (For this purpose pigs were raised to weigh not more than 100 kg live weight.) In addition to bacon, much live-stock was sent abroad. In the last few years the export of poultry had begun. Lithuanian poultry, particularly spring chickens, reached the same standard of quality as that of Hungary whose poultry-products were considered the best in the world market.

The export of meat and meat-products was solely in the hands of the firm "Maistas" ("Food"). The capital of this firm was mostly government-owned and it was the largest food-processing organization in the country.

Maistas had five large modern plants for the production of a large variety of food products.

The Co-operative Dairy Association "Pienocentras" ("Milk Centre") organized the production and export of butter and other milk products. The export of butter began in 1924 and in 1938 the year's ex-

The building of "Pienocentras" in Kaunas

port was 18.000 tons. During this period Lithuanian export products not only steadily increased in quantity but also greatly improved in quality. Lithuanian butter in the English market (where most of it was exported) was considered equal to the Danish and Australian brands which were held to be best in quality. The demand for Lithuanian butter had reached a stage where "Pienocentras" could fulfill but 50% of the orders received. In the years preceding World War II, Lithuanian butter was well known not only in Europe but also in Egypt, Algiers, Palestine and other distant countries.

"Pienocentras" was the largest organization in the field of dairy products as "Maistas" was in meat products. It was organized on a

co-operative basis with State support. This association was comprised of some 270 dairies and 1800 milk-gathering and cream-separating stations and had a membership of more than 16.000. In addition to butter, "Pienocentras" purchased and exported eggs, mostly to England. Before World War II, over 100 million eggs were exported annually. The quality of these eggs was highly esteemed in the English Market.

Among other agricultural products exported from Lithuania, flax had a high place. Up to 1936, the export of flax was entirely a private enterprise, but after this date, the Co-operative Association "Linas" ("Flax") took over most of the export, due to its success in improving the quality of flax. By 1939, Lithuanian flax in the world market was considered equal to Belgian flax, which was estimated to be the best. In 1938, the firm "Sodyba" ("Homestead") began to organize the export of fruit, wild berries and mushrooms. Most of these products were exported to Germany. Apples were the chief product exported. With the increase of the export of these secondary agricultural products, the Lithuanian farmer's interest in his orchard and berry products grew. For the preserving of berries and fruit "Sodyba" constructed a modern factory which produced 1.200.000 liters of fruit juice and other products annually.

The large organizations mentioned above were of great importance in the improvement of agriculture and the welfare and education of the farmer. They not only looked after trade and export, but also saw to the improvement of the respective branches of agriculture. The greater part of the profits was used for this purpose and to help the farmers in general. These organizations were also interested in auxiliary branches of the export trade. One of their very valuable achievements was the organization of the Lithuanian commercial fleet under the name of the Lithuanian Baltic Lloyd Company, which purchased several ships in a few months time. Thus Lithuanian products for export were shipped to distant parts of the world in their own vessels. Ships flying the Lithuanian tricolour were often seen in the large ports of England, Germany, France, Scandinavia and other countries.

These organizations also took care of various industries based on agriculture. Through their efforts, soap, oil and fruit-juice factories were built. These plants processed various products left over from export for local consumption.

Credit. The finances of the country were in the hands of eight large banks. The Land Bank gave credit to the farmers for improving their land, buildings, acquiring machinery and generally increasing production. With the help of this credit, during twenty years, life in the country improved to such a great extent and became so attractive, that many townsmen "went back to the land".

Agricultural Education. Much attention was paid to agricultural education and the preparation of agricultural experts. There was an Aca-

The Chamber of Agriculture

demy of Agriculture in Lithuania (at Dotnuva), which prepared agricultural specialists and was also occupied in scientific research. There were always about 400 students enrolled at the Academy and about 50 graduated each year. The majority of the graduates immediately took up agricultural organizing and instruction. Others worked in the large economic organizations. At the Academy and its auxiliary institutions there were about 100 scientists who were engaged in agricultural research and scientific work.

Throughout the country there were many primary and secondary agricultural schools and various courses which did a great deal to improve the standards of agriculture. Mention should be made of the agricultural press which did very valuable work, too.

Organizations. In order to promote the welfare and information of the farmers, a Chamber of Agriculture was established which was a representative organization of all the country's farmers. It served the interests of the farmers and helped the government to prepare various agricultural laws. Cultural work was done through various organizations, formed by the farmers and led by agricultural specialists. Most of these organizations had sections and subsections all over the country. Country boy and girls had a special organization which encouraged love for the soil and farming. In the last few years before the War, there was a special course of agricultural elementary training in all schools. The idea was that every Lithuanian should not only be aquainted with agriculture by experience but should also know a little of the theory of agriculture.

The Great Calamity. The Second World War brought appalling disaster to quiet, peace-loving Lithuania. It destroyed everything that the Lithuanians had created in the twenty-two years of their independence, through their industry and tireless devotion. The successive occupants of Lithuania were not concerned with the preservation of the country's welfare, less still with its improvement. Many processing plants for agricultural produce were destroyed, many more ruthlessly plundered. It is difficult to-day to calculate the losses Lithuania suffered, but probably, in proportion to the size of the country, they are not less than in war-ravaged other countries. But most important of all is that, during the course of the War, many of the best sons and daughters of Lithuania lost their lives and many others were displaced from their homeland and are roaming homeless in various strange countries, sustained only by the hope of seeing the meadows and forests of their country, and of cultivating its fields again.

II. Trade and Industry

The industry like the agriculture of Lithuania is to be divided into two periods. The beginning of the modern independent Lithuania also marks the start of the second industrial period. In the old independent Lithuania, as during the Russian (Czarist) occupation, there was little or no industry. All that could be classified as industry, were breweries, destilleries, semi-primitive wood-working plants, flour mills and similar plants caring for the daily needs of the inhabitants. The only exeptions were the leather tanneries at Siauliai and famous tanneries and fur-dressnig plants in the historical Lithuanian capital of Vilnius. From ancient times Vilnius was world-known as a centre of the fur industry. At the beginning of the XX-th century a few heavy industry plants were built which imported raw material, but these were destroyed during World War I, so that the new independent Lithuania had to build industry anew.

Industry. Independent Lithuania, adjusting economic situation, began by organizing industry based on agriculture. This industry's primary effort was to prepare agricultural products for export. Along with his other branches of industry appeared to serve domestic needs.

In addition to the already mentioned sugar industry the distilleries played an important role. Alcohol was a monopoly of the State but the production of alcohol was in the hands of private enterprise. The producers sold their products to the Ministry of Finance.

Distilleries almost without exception used potatoes as a source of raw material. The products of the distilleries were used not only as a beverage but in industry. From 1938 a mixture of 70% gasoline and 30% dehydrated alcohol called "motorinas" was used in internal combustion motors. In this manner the import of gasoline was decreased. For some time alcohol and "degtinė" (an alcoholic beverage very much like vodka) was exported to the U.S.A. but the passing

of the Prohibition Act put a stop to this. A fairly large beer and fruit-wine industry had grown up to serve domestic needs.

Medium-sized tanneries were established for domestic needs, but they also found foreign markets for part of their products. This industry not only used domestic but also imported raw material. The tobacco industry fully satisfied the domestic market but practically all of its raw materials were imported. In the last few years the growing of tobacco was begun but did not have the time to expand.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Lithuania had a considerable textile industry, using partly imported, partly domestic raw materials. From domestic raw material, woolen and linen textiles were manufactured, from imported raw stuff, cotton, silk and rayon cloth.

The lumber industry not only served the domestic market but produced a surplus for export. The Lithuanian timber industry can be divided into two parts:

1) heavy timber industry which manufactured domestic forest products into semifinished lumber for export or partly processed timber imported from Russia, to be re-exported to other countries;

2) light timber industry which produced finished building material and furniture.

The growing cities and the modernization of form buildings caused the growth of a medium-sized brick and other building material industry. These factories were organized by private capital, municipal and co-operative interests. Preparations were made for the organization of a cement industry, but world events prevented the completion of this project.

A great obstacle to the growth of Lithuanian industry was the lack of a source of cheap energy. To remove this handicap, electrification of the country was planned, by constructing a large hydroelectric station on the river Nemunas and a series of booster stations. This project was not carried out due to the lack of free capital and to World War II. A foreign loan was not feasible because of the international situation, and generally speaking, foreign- owned industries were non-existent in Lithuania. Only under special conditions was a foreign-owned match industry established in Lithuania, for the manufacture and export of matches.

Generally speaking, Lithuanian industry grew and developed in a sound manner. Organized by companies (stockholders) of co-operatives working for the most part with domestic raw materials, it had natural opportunities for expansion and was a positive effort to furnish needed products to the world market.

Trade. In the first few years of Lithuanian independence there was a very weak trade system.

In Lithuania, which possessed neither its own industry nor trade, business was carried on by retail dealers.

As industry began to grow, it was necessary for the manufacturing plants to start organizing trade, therefore the large agricultural manufactoring plants became the largest Lithuanian business organizations supplying not only the domestic market with products, but also exporting these products.

With the increase of the country's economic strength, great need was felt for the importation of various manfactured articles, which were handled by private individuals, private companies and co-operatives, acting as importers and exporters. Of these, the largest was a co-operative society "Lietūkis" ("Lith. Agriculture"). Lithuania having no surplus of foreign exchange, could not afford to have a luxury trade. The balancing of Lithuanian exports and imports was the only guarantee of keeping our currency stable. For all economic purposes the stability of our currency was maintained and from 1922 when, the "Litas" was introduced, its value never changed.

Lithuania was an interesting partner for industrial countries, for having an economy based on agriculture she did not favour an industry which required imported raw materials but she readily purchased finished manufactured articles.

Lithuania's chief business partners were England, Soviet Russia, Germany and, to a lesser degree, the U.S.A. These were the largest purchasers of Lithuanian products.

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